Lateral

Journal of the Cultural Studies Association

“A Pinch of Imagination”

by Paulina Lanz and Sulafa Zidani | Feeding the Civic Imagination, Issue 13.1 (Spring 2024)

ABSTRACT There is a rise in events connecting people to food, the sources of food, and the materiality of food––including all its affective and sensorial qualities. We have found that this not only translates into food politics but into a wide array of power dynamics surrounding food that connect our past to our imagined/desired futures, especially as we engage with conversations that become nodes that facilitate connections across cultures. The connection lies beyond the ingredients but in the affective agency within them and their relationship to each other. We focus on how we connect through the ingredients, how we measure them, and how they exist in relation to one another, as ingredients strengthen the affective connection with food materiality, as we feel the textures and tastes in order to know if you put the right quantity. Our proposal is a provocation of how transnational creative practices are produced and translated through a cocreated recipe whereby talking through a common recipe (and how that recipe came to be) we disclose and imagine glocal similarities between Mexican food and Palestinian food.

KEYWORDS affect, civic imagination, food politics, materiality

A Frothy Prologue

Amid the stressful experiences of attending graduate school during the pandemic, the two of us connected over our appreciation of frothed milky drinks. The airiness, malleability, and visually soothing qualities of the frothed milk allowed us to find a peaceful moment, creating a connection that added texture to an otherwise quotidian drink There are some senses that are more prone to prompting our imagination; taste, touch, and smell do just that. Creamy, bubbly, and aromatic, each of these naturally occurring foams adds a comforting

dimension of texture to drinks. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine period, deprived of each other's in-person company, we began sending photos sharing our homemade frothy drinks: iced cappuccino, latte, hot cocoa . . . Those photos were reminders to let go of the anxiety we both felt due to the pandemic and graduate school and be in the moment. They said "I know what you are going through. I am here." They were a way for us to be together in our rage and comfort and push beyond them.[1] As our drinks got more creative (matcha latte, golden milk . . .), their symbolism grew. The photos we shared became gestures of care and comfort that opened a conversation about food, community, memory, and imagination. This piece is a recipe of care, where we build on the traditions of the civic imagination by making solidarity the basis on which we connect through shared interests and embrace different perspectives and experiences.[2] First, we will provide some background on our relationship and interest in food. We will then have a dialogue reflecting on the cultural connections between Mexican and Palestinian cuisine. Next, we will present our imagined cocreated recipe. We allow ourselves to whip up a mode of conversation through the cultural significance and the story behind food and what it allows us to imagine together, direct, and personal, and informed by collective and cultural understanding of the systems of meaning, memory, and identity behind the meals that shape us.

As we build on the past, and on our personal stories and upbringings, we activate the imagination by bringing together different perspectives of our own relationship to food. There are particular qualities of edible memories that can be expanded upon, especially when it comes to the motivating connection between food and personal memories. However, we found particular interest in the possibilities of connection in evoked imagination "driven by the combined promise of unfamiliarity and a rich narrative," when connections to the past come from unfamiliar taste.[3] By doing so, we shed light on cultural and transnational connections to reclaim the possibility of imagining collectively. The recognition of our individual voices reinforces the communal interconnectedness we shaped

through froth, allowing this vibrant sensory experience to guide us in conceiving a cocreation through food. Stephen Duncombe's work on *Dream: Re-imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy* brings about the concept of an ethical spectacle that happens through co-created collective participation to contribute to the materialization of transformative action through interventions.[4]

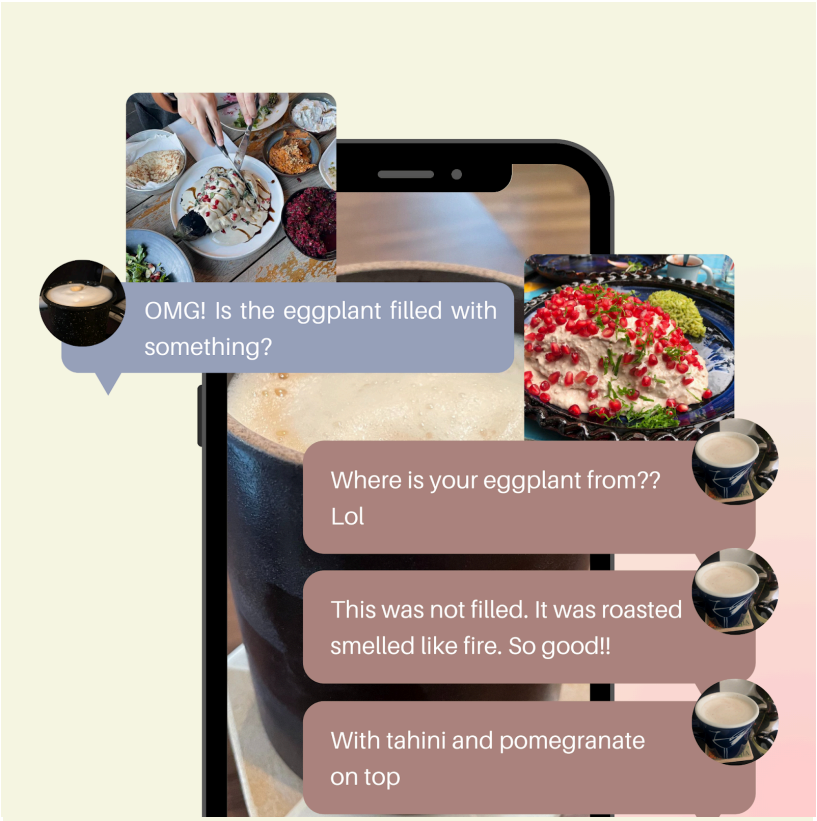
This is our own intervention, one rooted in remembrance and nostalgia. However, instead of these affective registers drifting us away from dreams halted from possibility, we use our imagination to create together, to break away from the constraints of measurements, of a structure-based cuisine—because the civic imagination prompts the individual to foster the collective, to imagine oneself as a civic actor who can make a difference is a key part of civic imagination. But, civic imagination also requires engaging with others; we do so through this conversation, by appreciating and empathizing with the views of others. Our collaboration is an extension of the communities we belong to, locally and transnationally. It is also an invitation to all who choose to join in.

The civic imagination being a social, rather than individual, process that emerges from a shared vision, helps us express our desires for radical change that we feel can happen through instances of food––particularly that shared across generations. We take inspiration from historian Robin D.G. Kelley in *Freedom Dreams*, for food–like poetry–has the possibility of transporting us to a different place, where we are capable of imagining something new, new spaces for collective action that come together through the materiality of food.[5] This conversation-through-recipes is in itself a case study of transnational popular culture that engages the civic imagination whereas recipes as in themselves vehicles to pass along shared wisdom, as inspired by Henry Jenkins, Gabriel Peters-Lazaro, and Sangita Shresthova.[6] This is also an invitation to imagine alongside us, to daydream about meals that bring home closer, regardless of geopolitical location.

Figures 1 & 2. A selection of pandemic froth exchange between Lanz and Zidani

Is The Eggplant Filled With Something?

Our exchange of frothed milk photos opened up conversations about our shared interest in food: where it comes from, how we relate to it, and how we relate through it to each other—Zidani's foodie recommendations in Los Angeles were life-changing to Lanz, especially tacos. Every meal encounter became a moment of connection, especially as similarities arose between Middle Eastern and Latin American cuisine. Perhaps it was our global roots finding their way to each other, forging solidarities *through* an active enactment of our different ethnic origins.


OMG! Is the eggplant filled with something?
Where is your eggplant from?? Lol
This was not filled. It was roasted smelled like fire. So good!!
With tahini and pomegranate on top

Mine is a traditional Mexican pepper filled with candied meat and with walnut sauce with pomegranate on top 😄
Hmmm
Is this incident going to be the inspiration for our civic imagination recipe article???? 😱😱😱
I was wondering the same thing

Figures 3 & 4. Visual representations of a conversation that took place between the authors at some point during the 2020–2022 time vortex.

In our conversations about food, we found connections and resonance across cultures: from shawarma and tacos al pastor to traditional desserts made with dough, nuts, dried fruit, and sugar syrup in Palestine.

Figure 5. Zidani’s family tasting a roasted eggplant with tahini, January 2022.

Figure 6. Lanz inaugurating Chile en Nogada season in early June 2021.

Dough and nutty delights, seeds and honey make their way into bars in traditional Mexican sweets, where nuts, raisins, and peanuts share the stage with chocolate, sweet and unsweetened. From colonial times, fruits such as quince, guava, lemon, and strawberry were also used to prepare *ate moreliano*, which, paired with aged cheese, makes an absolute delight. Water, sugar, and lime in Palestinian sweets equate to water, piloncillo, and lime in Mexico when old and stale resources are renewed by being submerged in boiling liquid elixir. There are other sources of cultural fusions, such as tacos árabes, Turkish coffee, and cactus fruit as a national symbol. Migration plays an important role in these culinary cultural exchanges; Iraqi families fled to Mexico from the Middle East in the early twentieth century due to the British invasion. They found similarities between their kebabs

and Mexican tacos and pinched their imagination as a means of survival by creating tacos árabes in the city of Puebla: pork döner kebab, Mexican labneh, and chipotle-based sauce. However, since migration is rarely unidirectional, a Palestinian national symbol, the *Sabr* (or cactus pear), grown all over the Middle East and also used as a natural border between houses and villages, are lineages that originated in Mexico.[7] This visual omnipresence in the Middle East, with a deep connection to the Palestinian imagery, was imported from Mexico by European traders as a scurvy prevention method. These fusions help better understand the connections in cultural practices, where ingredients and food display both the interpreted and the imagined influences and shared emotions towards enacting change.

Figure 7. Knafeh that Zidani enjoyed with her cousin at Qashash Sweets in Akka, December 2021.

Figure 8. Freshly made amaranth bar that Lanz got from the market in Mexico City, December 2021.

Cultural Connections

Pick an item from the fridge.

Every kitchen holds essential ingredients that its cooks cannot go without. The mundane basics that you will always find in Zidani's grandma, Mariam (Umm Saeed) Sindawi's house are foundations for the history and identity of Palestinian cuisine.[8] In each of our refrigerators, fresh vegetables and fruit are a majority of the basics. However, the type of vegetable and its preparation process varies widely between Palestinian and Mexican cuisines. The nuanced difference between parsley and cilantro plays an important role when it comes to transforming minced tomato, onion, and lemon juice into a tabbouli/pico de gallo salad. This labor of transformation as an act of love also plays a role when making taboon bread and flour tortillas by hand, where a pinch of flour or a drizzle of water will make a difference between a puffed dough treat and a soggy ball of wheat. As to how to better enjoy this freshly baked bread? How about with a rustic handmade traditional dish of silky and coarsely mashed ingredients with lime juice, topped with seasonings and salt? Lanz's mind went to her favorite taco-stand guacamole recipe, while Zidani visited her grandmother's (not-so-secret) recipe of homemade hummus bi tahini, indulged with a freshly baked mouthful of flour delight.

These are the memories we drew on when we imagined our co-created recipe. A dish that brings our own everyday ingredients together at the center of the table––or on peripheral ones, that cocreate how we engage with each other while navigating this space that prompts the imagination. The recipe and countertop become radical spaces for exchange, both in political commitments and individual memories; it becomes a material framework for new ways of recipe making and sharing. As you look through the list of ingredients, we invite you to use your imagination and memory of flavors and textures to discern what quantities need to be.

Measurements

How do you know how much water to add to rice? Or how much lemon juice to add to tahini? A recipe teaches us to follow instructions carefully to avoid ruining a dish. Zidani often gets recipes from her grandmother over the phone, where Teyta Umm Sa'eed carefully explains what the ratio of onion to coriander to parsley should be to make the perfect falafel, and how the "masa" should feel somewhere between crumbly and sticky to the touch to know that it is not too soggy. Other directions are passed down in written form, as Lanz noticed in a *Good Housekeeping Illustrated Cookbook* that has been passed down through three generations.

5½ cups batter
Rectangular: 3 cups
Micro: 6 min. Low; 4½ min. High
Stand 10 min. uncovered

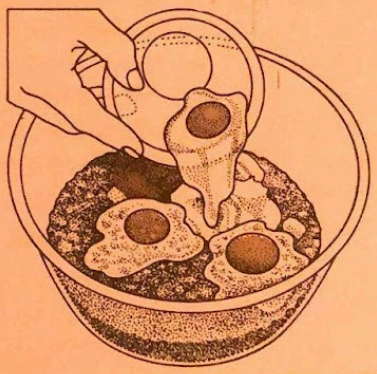
Chocolate Cupcakes

Color index page 93

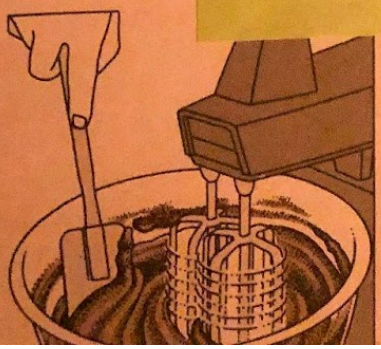
Begin early in day

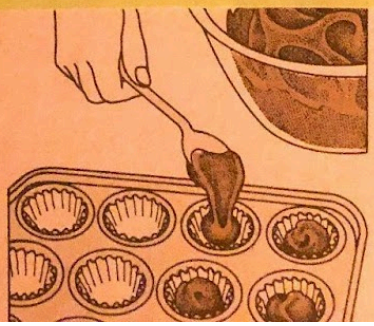
24 cupcakes

2 cups cake flour
1 ¾ cups sugar
¾ cup cocoa
1¼ cups milk
¾ cup shortening
3 eggs
1¼ teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon double-acting baking powder
Coffee Cream-Cheese Frosting (page 400)



1 Preheat ov
Place liners
3-inch muffin
grease and flo





ready for her party.

The scientification of measurements in the form of exact prescribed quantities in recipes entered the kitchen as part of a process of modernizing food cultures, a process that was specifically tied to the idea of civility.[9] In our own cocreated recipe, we steer away from exact measurements and return to our parents' and grandparents' descriptive measurements. In this way, we break the push for manufactured specificity and ideas of purity in measurements and instead invite you to engage with past experience, textures, mouthfeel, and your own taste to determine what measurement is right.

This invitation is founded in the acknowledgment that eating[10] and cooking[11] are both political acts where power is enacted through taste, measurement, and, in our case, through making food together. We want to invite you to imagine alternatives—those that can later prompt conversations of solidarity and change, and add to the sharing of energies and emotions as they relate to food in order to make social change sensorially and affectively tangible. This aligns with the central aim of this special issue, "Feeding the Civic Imagination," which explores how engaging with food can spark alternative possibilities of civic participation and drive positive social transformations.[12] We want to understand how collective energies and shared emotions in relation to food pave the way for tangible social change. We invite perspectives and experiences, to materialize imaginative dimensions through an ingredient-based practice, measuring ingredients in relation to each other and to the number of people eating. In the recipe, you will notice that we give options rather than measurements, and descriptions about texture and taste to let you know how to test the food. We thought this practice would be especially apt in this special section because it asks readers (and cooks) to activate the imagination about the past times they have tried this food and connect it to their desired taste for the recipe's outcome.

Ingredients

Vegetables to Roast

Pick your vegetables to roast either in the oven (425°F) or on a BBQ for an extra smoky taste.

Eggplant	*For this dish, get a large eggplant (or more, depending on how many people are eating with you). It may be an Italian eggplant or any other type, as all eggplants are delicious. Zidani has made baba ganoush and mutabbal from Chinese eggplants and globe eggplants and it was always delicious.*
Poblano Pepper	*You can create this dish with any size of pepper. We do recommend that you aim for a medium-large poblano pepper, as you will need to stuff it and wrap it around itself– burrito style. You will need to roast the pepper, sweat it in a plastic bag, and peel it right after. Make sure to open a window; you never know if your pepper will be extra spicy and you will feel the burn through the fumes (based on Lanz's experience 9.5 out of 10 times roasting peppers). We highly recommend making more than just one pepper.*
Cactus (Nopales)	*We thought to introduce nopales to our dish because Palestinian and Mexican cultures both seem to hold cactus to a special status. Zidani remembers summers marked by cactus fruit being gifted to her family, and Lanz remembers summer afternoons with large bowls of green cactus fruit (tuna) peeled and ready to eat on the kitchen table. Cactus is the perfect side(kick) to every dish: boiled with lentil soup, grilled with cheese, steamed with street tacos, or chopped in a pico de gallo-style salad.*

Stuffing Options for Pepper

Start with the roast-sweat-peel technique on the poblano peppers while leaving the stem intact. Cut down on your firm and bright poblano and carve out the seeds and ribs of the pepper. You can stuff the peppers with candied (cooked apple, pear, tomato, peach, raisins, almonds, and plantain) 50/50 grounded beef & pork or choose to make the dish entirely vegetarian by stuffing it with one of the following:

Option 1: Cheese	*Lanz recommends going with "quesillo" or Oaxacan cheese. This variety of string cheese melts easily and makes the prepping process even more entertaining.*
Option 2: Veggie and fruit stuffing	*You can cook the traditional stuffing for the poblano without adding the ground meat. For consistency, you can add breadcrumbs or squares of queso fresco (panela).*

Sauce

Choose one or both sauces below. If you are making the tahini sauce, then you can pour it over the vegetables. Otherwise, make the nogada sauce on the side (or both sauces on the side).

Tahini ***Sauce:*** *TahiniLemon SaltWater*	*The amount of tahini depends on how many vegetables you're making. If you're making one of each, then start with ¼ cup of tahini. Add the lemon first (start with a tablespoon). Lemon thickens the tahini, so you'll want to follow with water, adding it gradually until you reach your desired texture. The resulting sauce needs to be creamy and liquid enough to pour over the vegetables. Add some salt, and taste it to see if any ingredients are missing.*
Nogada (walnut) ***Sauce:*** *WalnutsAlmondsCrème fraîcheQueso fresco*	*You can never have enough nogada. To avoid almonds overpowering the taste of your walnuts, make sure you have a 1:8 ratio of almonds to walnuts; almonds should be around a handful. While you ´re puréeing the nuts, start adding the crème fraîche and the crumbled queso fresco in equivalent amounts. Once you reach the desired taste, thin it with water until it is spreadable enough; add salt as needed—perhaps a pinch or two. Coat or top your stuffed poblano with nogada sauce or serve it on the side.*

Garnish

Garnish your dish with either parsley, coriander, or pomegranate.

Setting the Table

To us, sharing a meal represents a lot more than the physical act of going through the various treats before us. Eating together is one of many acts that take place in

the meal-sharing repertoire. It starts by choosing the recipe and selecting the ingredients. Every part evokes an emotional connection to those who will share the meal. As food becomes a link between absence and acts of love, sharing a meal goes beyond the culinary tradition, as it becomes a place to create bonds and dialogue between both loved ones and strangers, setting cultural differences out on the table to be discussed. It lies in the small symbolic actions like breaking an awkward silence with "*ahlan wasahlan*," or the perpetual avoidance of the top tortilla of the bunch, or even the metaphysical rational that meets another's superstitions when passing the salt in another's hand.

Figure 10. A quintessential Palestinian table with a selection of appetizers and salads from the Bread and Fish restaurant, Akka, 2021.

Figure 11. A visual representation of the avoided top tortilla, regardless of its origin. Photo taken at Mercado, Oaxaca, November 20, 2019.

In these subtle moments, communal act of eating is reflected in the small yet symbolically significant actions. The instruments we use to consume our meals take on greater meaning. For example, chopsticks designed for bite-sized morsels allow food to be grasped and conversation to flow. Hands scooping up shared dishes create intimacy through touch. In Barthes' view, neither utensil is merely functional, but rather they shape the experience and essence of the meal.[13] The food, the dishware, and the diners all come together in a synchronized movement that merges substance and symbol.

As we break the bread, the meal connects us in a time to be, to reconcile past and present, where heritage and imagination coexist through taste, scent, and touch.

Every affective register of the meal adds to the traces that connect the food-sharers, to pave the way for the future and as a pin-holder to find their way back as many times as needed. As people keep reminding others that they didn't eat enough, only to continuously add to their plate, Zidani's dinners are followed by a fight over who will do the dishes (people want to help and often whoever is hosting refuses the help). Lanz's have table talks that will last for hours, opening up space for conversation, coffee, cake, or an improvised dessert; eventually, guests will get hungry, and another meal will be shared.

Dessert

For dessert, we recommend that you find fresh fruit that is in season and cut it with your guests present rather than preparing it in advance. Get a large round tray and serve as you cut. You can squeeze some lime and sprinkle some tajin if you want to add a sweet acidity and spiciness to your fruit. You can talk about where this fruit was grown and where it is native to.

Figure 12. The epitome of acts of love in the shape of a fruit tray created by Zidani's grandmother.

Usually, after some digestion time, Zidani's family brings out a large tray with whatever fruit is in season. In the summer, it will be her father cutting up watermelon in his signature method where he peels it before chopping it into long rectangles, or her aunt will bring over fresh cactus fruit. In winter, the watermelon ceremony is replaced with a large pomelo ceremony, or with grandma peeling oranges and talking about their health benefits. Dessert is just as much part of the connection to family, land, and the seasons as the main meal. It is a family bonding activity focused on sharing love and nourishing each other. It is also a communal learning activity about our geographies, seasons, and the natural medicinal benefits of our foods.

Figure 13. Liquid dessert (a.k.a. Mexican hot chocolate made with cocoa and warm water) in a traditional clay gourd cup (*jícara de guaje*) paired with a vanilla concha, Puerto Escondido, June

2021.

Chocolate is well known for its connection to healing. This is where we can draw another instance of bonding through the land with sweet bread and xocolatl—Mexican hot chocolate. In Mexico, the sweet bread tradition dates back to the pre-Hispanic period, when corn-based tortillas—or *cocolli-* were used as offerings to the Aztec gods. These recipes changed through time into a wide variety of sweet bread that comes from an indigenous cultural fusion paired with colonial influences in the region. Xocolatl, on the other hand, is manually frothed in warm water, so all the senses can mindfully soak in the ritual of xocolatl—resembling the powerful Mayan and Aztec xocolatl rituals where chocolate was used to connect to the spirit world through the open heart. The warmth of the sweet bread and the hot chocolate are also affective registers of nourishment and love.

Epilogue: Coffee and Tea

After dessert, coffee, and tea are offered to the guests as a kind gesture that it is time to wrap up the fun and leave soon. These caffeinated beverages keep loved ones awake as they make their way back to their homes, lest the food makes them sleepy. Such acts of community care in preparing food, welcoming people, and even texting each other photos of frothy milk drinks serve as a foundation for us to cocreate our recipe.

To get to our recipe, we told each other stories that revealed not just our favorite family and cultural traditions, but also what is important for us to carry forward to the world. Exchanging stories about the experiences, traditions, and recipe elements that are most important to us opened up room for us to imagine a recipe that brings together the elements that are most meaningful to us. Together, we recounted how measurements and textures were communicated to us by our elders, the smells and touches that livened up the atmosphere, and the gestures

and actions that conveyed mutual care. When it comes to the question "What can a recipe do?," as a practice in civic imagination, being able to incorporate each of our worlds in the recipe gave us a quotidian taste of possible futures. It invites our reader to imagine alongside us, prompting their individual imagination towards a collective way of thinking and *doing* civic imagination through the ingredients we select and the memories these recipes foster. This possibility drove us to write the recipe with flexibility so that others can iterate on it, making their own selections and inserting their own touch.

A Mexican and a Palestinian coming together to create today is a recognition that our histories and our future are inextricably linked. Our frothy drinks, roasted vegetables, and shared recipes constitute an opening space for the world of engagement and mutual care that we desire. In her book, *A Place at the Nayarit*, Mexican American historian Natalia Molina writes about her grandmother's restaurant in order to demonstrate how Mexican women's labor carves out spaces for Latinx immigrants in Los Angeles to connect with one another through tastes of where they come from and where they are.[14] The restaurant, the Nayarit, thus became a place where conversations about food could act as a precursor for solidarity, safety, and community care in a racist and anti-immigrant environment. We hope that, in the absence of physical proximity, this recipe can form such a space for people to meet at the point where their tastes connect, and their politics intersect.

Moreover, we had both witnessed examples of Mexican, Palestinian, and other food appropriations that disconnect them from their context and contribute to the erasure of the culture instead of connecting to it and benefiting the people who created it. Foregrounding the practices and historical significance is another act of civic engagement and imagining otherwise. Imagination can pass along these memories and cultural expressions, despite the unavoidable transcultural influences[15] and a hybridity of culture.[16] Therefore, rather than creating a fusion recipe born through cultural appropriation, we use our conversations to suggest a

different form of consumption and culture-mixing that is founded on cocreation, care, history, and continuity.

Pour yourself a frothy drink.

Get cooking.

Join in imagination.

Notes

1. Spatula&Barcode, "Rage Grief Comfort &," *Lateral* 6, no. 2 (Winter 2017): https://doi.org/10.25158/L6.2.12 < https://doi.org/10.25158/L6.2.12> .
2. Henry Jenkins, Gabriel Peters-Lazaro, and Sangita Shresthova, eds., *Popular Culture and the Civic Imagination: Case Studies of Creative Social Change* (New York: NYU Press, 2020).
3. Jennifer A. Jordan, *Edible Memory: The Lure of Heirloom Tomatoes and Other Forgotten Foods* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
4. Stephen Duncombe, *Dream: Re-Imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy* (New York: New Press, 2007).
5. Robin D. G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002).
6. Jenkins, Peters-Lazaro, and Shresthova, *Popular Culture*.
7. M. P. Griffith, "The Origins of an Important Cactus Crop, Opuntia Ficus-Indica (Cactaceae): New Molecular Evidence," *American Journal of Botany* 91, no. 11 (November 1, 2004): 1915–21, https://doi.org/10.3732/ajb.91.11.1915 < https://doi.org/10.3732/ajb.91.11.1915> .
8. Aina J. Khan, "Preserving a Palestinian Identity in the Kitchen," *New York Times*, October 19, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/19/world/middleeast/palestinian-culinary-traditions.html?smid=tw-share < https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/19/world/middleeast/palestinian-culinary-traditions.html?smid=tw-share> .
9. Helen Zoe Veit, *Modern Food, Moral Food: Self-Control, Science, and the Rise of Modern American Eating in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).
10. Kyla Wazana Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).

11. Lily Wei, “Art as Protest, Cooking as Resistance: Everyday Life in Taipei’s Housing Rights Movement,” *Lateral* 7, no. 2 (Fall 2018): https://doi.org/10.25158/L7.2.6 < https://doi.org/10.25158/L7.2.6> .
12. See the introduction < https://csalateral.org/forum/feeding-the-civic-imagination/introduction-kim-shresthova-lanz/> to this forum.
13. Roland Barthes, “Chopsticks,” in Empire of Signs, translated by Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982).
14. Natalia Molina, *A Place at the Nayarit: How a Mexican Restaurant Nourished a Community* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2022).
15. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 2007).
16. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2012).

Author Information

Paulina Lanz

Paulina is a PhD candidate at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and holds a certificate in Digital Media and Culture from the USC School of Cinematic Arts. Rooted in material cultural studies, Paulina addresses absence as a source of memory and nostalgia as storytelling and communication. By the means of visual and audible aesthetics, her research projects and pedagogies expand on sensorial fields to foster an interdisciplinary commitment in multimodal approaches to public scholarship.

View all of Paulina Lanz's articles.

Sulafa Zidani

Sulafa Zidani is a writer, speaker, and educator at Northwestern University, where she is an Assistant Professor in Communication Studies. As a critical global internet studies scholar, she researches civic engagement and online creative practices across languages. Her work has been informed by her proficiency in Mandarin, English,

Arabic, Hebrew, and French. She is currently working on her first book project called *All Your Meme Are Belong To Us: Internet Cultures in the Global South* about how meme creators navigate transnational politics on the multilingual internet. Her research has appeared in venues such as *Social Media + Society*, *International Journal of Communication*, and *Asian Communication Research*. She is a co-editor of the forthcoming anthology *The Intersectional Internet II: Power, Politics and Resistance Online*.

View all of Sulafa Zidani's articles.

Article details

Paulina Lanz & Sulafa Zidani, ""A Pinch of Imagination"," *Lateral* 13.1 (2024).

https://doi.org/10.25158/L13.1.10

This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. Copyright is retained by authors.

Lateral is the peer-reviewed, open access journal of the Cultural Studies Association.

ISSN 2469-4053